

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3817

May 09, 2025

Mr. Donald Koenig
Director, VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System
Pittsburgh VA Medical Center
University Drive C
Pittsburgh, PA 15240

Dear Director Koenig,

On May 4th, the New York Times published an article on how the Trump Administration's VA in-person work policy is hurting VA mental health care.¹ On May 6th, ProPublica published an article on how the Administration's VA cuts have impacted clinical trials and the treatment of cancer, cardiovascular disease, opioid overdose, and more, including specific impacts on the VA Pittsburgh Health System (VAPHS).² The ProPublica article references communication from VAPHS about the devastating impacts of the Trump Administration's cuts, and I write to better understand the current state of research and clinical trials, mental health care, and space constraints at VAPHS.

1. How has the Trump Administration's mandate to end remote work impacted VAPHS?
 - a. Please describe the number of VAPHS employees impacted by this policy and the resulting challenges arising from the policy's implementation.
 - b. Has VAPHS had to make parking and workspace accommodations to comply with this policy? Does VAPHS have adequate parking and workspace for VAPHS employees and my fellow veterans?
 - c. Has VAPHS received additional funding to make any necessary space accommodation for veterans and staff?
 - d. Does VAPHS currently suffer from a shortage of psychologists and psychiatrists?
 - e. There have been reports of some VA facilities where mental healthcare providers have been forced to treat veterans in spaces that violate patient confidentiality. What steps has VAPHS taken to guard against this?
2. The ProPublica article identified seven VAPHS clinical trials impacted by the Trump Administration's actions like the hiring freeze and terminations.
 - a. What has been the impact on these clinical trials?
 - b. What is the status of these clinical trials?
 - c. Has treatment for my fellow veterans enrolled in these trials been affected?
 - d. Are VA researchers still being impacted by the January hiring freeze? Please describe how many are still being impacted and the number that have either quit or been fired.
3. Are there additional clinical trials not reported in the ProPublica article that have been impacted by the Administration's hiring freeze or DOGE's contract terminations?

Thank you for your service to this country and veterans across Western Pennsylvania. I request answers to the above questions no later than May 16, 2025. I look forward to your prompt reply.

Very respectfully,



Chris Deluzio
Member of Congress

¹ Trump's V.A. Squeezes Mental Health Care in Crowded Offices, Raising Privacy Concerns - The New York Times

² Internal VA Emails Reveal How Trump Jeopardizes Veterans' Care — ProPublica